



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

Meeting Date: July 10, 2023

MINUTES

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney Heath,
Director, Planning &
Development

Amanda Berman
Director, Housing &
Community Development

Nika Sandal
Planner
Community Development

Members

Eileen Sandberg, Co-Chair
Ima Jonsdottir, Co-Chair
Jane Brown, Treasurer
Lucie Chansky
Petr Chovanec
Lakshmi Kadambi
Nyree Kibarian
Anne Marie Killilea
Nancy Kritzman
Darby Leigh
Sandra Lingley
Barbara Lischinsky
Matt Volpi

Jason Rosenberg
Chairman Emeritus

Advisor

Sergeant Michael B. Wade
Newton Police Department

Staff

Jini Fairley
ADA/Sec 504 Coordinator
617-796-1253

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Newton, MA 02459
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Room: Zoom

Time: 6:00PM

This meeting was a virtual meeting on Zoom, by phone or by computer/iPad:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84610100556?pwd=L2FuS2Rsem1UDlNeGIHOEpdnJ6QT09>

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Commission Members Present:

Ima Jonsdottir, Co-Chair, participating remotely
Eileen Sandberg, Co-Chair, participating remotely
Jane Brown, Treasurer, participating remotely
Lucie Chansky, participating remotely
Nancy Kritzman, participating remotely
Sandra Lingley, participating remotely
Barbara Lischinsky, participating remotely
Matt Volpi, participating remotely

Commission Members Absent:

Nyree Kibarian
Petr Chovanec
Lakshmi Kadambi
Anne Marie Killilea
Darby Leigh

City Staff Present:

Jini Fairley, ADA Coordinator
Sgt. Wade, Police
Nika Sandal, Planning
Sharon Cullins, Planning
Hattie Kerwin Derrick, Mayor's Office

Guests:

Councilor Bowman
Leanne Dunne, Williams School PTO & parents

1. Introductions (6:00-6:05)

The meeting started on time with 7 members present.

2. Approval of the June 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes (6:05-6:10)

Ima asked if there were any changes to the draft minutes of the June meeting.

Hearing none, Jane made a motion to approve/accept the minutes as drafted and distributed. Matt seconded the motion. The Minutes were approved by a vote of 6-0-1 (Barbara abstained).

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3. CDBG Report (6:10-6:15)

Nika gave the CDBG report. This report can be found on page 6.

Lucie asked if CDBG funds could be used for a consultant for a campaign for municipalities to create housing for people with disabilities. Nika said no, the CDBG Access funds are for barrier removal/physical access, but Jini mentioned that other CDBG fund received by the city are mostly used for housing initiatives. Lucie said that this campaign involves vouchers being used for more people with disabilities.

4. More FY25 CDBG-Funded Project Ideas (6:15-6:30)

Sandra asked if we could revisit installing RRFBs crossing 4 lanes of traffic on Washington St., as she has observed it working somewhere (maybe not in Newton). she would like to know if and where in the city they exist. Councilor Bowman said that using an RRFB for 4 lanes of traffic is dangerous, that Washington St. needs a road diet, where there are only 2 lanes of traffic (one in each direction) , prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists, widen the narrow sidewalks, etc. in order to allow for safer crossing . There was also discussion about crossing the NWH driveway, how to make it safer, and a curb ramp needed at or near the ramp going into the temporary Senior Center and need to check out the access aisle of the accessible parking space nearest there as well. Barbara offered to do a site visit with a new member of Waban Commons, to view some access issues there. Ima said she would like to go, and suggested one of the members who use a mobility device, like Nyree.

5. Accessible Fines Reports (6:30-6:35)

Sgt. Wade gave the 2 Fines reports. These reports can be found on page 7 & 8.

6. Treasurer's Report (6:35-6:40)

Jane gave the Treasurer's report, which can be viewed on page 9. Jini explained the increase in the Fines funds, as this is the first fiscal year, that just ended on June 30, 2023 where the COD account receives 100% of the fines collected/paid to the city, reflected in this new total.

7. Williams School Proposal for Fund Request (6:40-7:05)

Ima introduced the PTO representative and parents of the Williams Elementary School, who had reached out to Jini to ask how the playground could become more inclusive. Leanne Dunne, representing the Williams Elementary School, explained the existing playground and the need for more accessible equipment. She presented the proposal requesting accessible improvements for their playground, especially now because they have a new program at the school, called Reflections, for students with several disabilities, including mobility disabilities. There are no swings at all, so, once a swing structure is purchased and installed, the PTO is requesting 2 adaptable swings. In addition, they would like an adjustable basketball pole, where the backboard, hoop and net could be lowered for students using a wheelchair and be able to play with their peers. Although there are picnic tables in the playground area, there are no accessible picnic tables, so the proposal includes 2 accessible picnic tables so the students with mobility devices can enjoy lunch with their

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peers outside. This proposal can be viewed on pages 10-11. Several parents shared how their child experiences recess, and sadly, most do not go out for this fun time, as there is nothing they can enjoy or participate in. Swings were mentioned several times as the key play element desired but missing at Williams. COD members asked if the principal was involved, and all assured that he is but he is new to the district and Williams, and wasn't fully aware of the process to make the playground more accessible. Several departments are meeting and will be involved in these improvements including PRC, NPS, and DPW, Hattie added. Lucie commented that, in her opinion, much of the responsibility lies with the school administration to make sure that when a new program begins at a school, that the playground is ready for the students needing more access. Ima also shared her son's experience in elementary school, expressing as a Kindergartener that he was most happy when school began in September and class photos were taken, and months later telling her how he is separated from his friends on the playground. He made the best of it, he is very social and outgoing, but children shouldn't need to 'make-do' and it is a huge inequity for the development of children's social and emotional life.

Ima asked the members if they would like to make a motion to vote to use Fines funds to fulfill this proposal, knowing that this is a bigger project and plans are underway for these improvements by the departments listed above, and that it is possible that some of the play equipment may be a different model, or replaced by another piece of accessible equipment, depending on the design and plans.

Lucie made a motion to use the Fines funds to purchase accessible play equipment for the Williams Elementary School, such as what is listed in this proposal or different equipment of equal value, depending on the design plans for this playground, limited to the amount of this proposal, \$10,831.12. More discussion ensued from members, Hattie and Jini. Barbara felt there should be more discussion by the COD members as this is a large amount of money and the COD should consider if we want to do this for other schools as well. Lucie said that her motion is only for Williams and that each school would come before the COD and each time, the members can decide whether the COD has spent enough on school playground equipment overall. Since there was a motion on the table, Ima asked for a second, and Nancy seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5 (Lucie, Nancy, Matt, Jane, Ima) -1 (Barbara)-1 (Sandra). Lucie suggested that a staff person from NECP with expertise to join the many departments working on this plan and possibly someone from Northeastern's Therapeutic Recreation Center. Ima thanked Leanne for all her hard work putting this proposal together and staying on top of this effort, which will benefit many children at Williams, now and in the future.

Later in the meeting, Hattie suggested a topic for September or a future COD meeting, for the members to discuss if they want to standardize how outside groups request Fines funds, for example, with an application, explaining benefits, etc. Jini mentioned that she suggested something similar for school PTOs, where a grant amount was established and standard application would be used, but it wasn't agreed upon by the members then.

8. ADA Coordinator's Report (7:05-7:15)

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Due to the late hour, Jini asked if there were any questions about her ADA activities listed in her report, which was submitted to all members last week. Hearing none, Ima moved to the next agenda item. This report can be found on page 12.

9 Co-Chairs' Updates (7:15-7:45)

At this point in the meeting Eileen was able to join. Ima and Eileen, along with Jini and Hattie met with the Mayor in June. They talked about plans for recognizing the ADA 33rd anniversary of its signing. A plan is being developed by the Director of Transportation Planning, Josh Ostroff, to have our Congressional Representative Jake Auchincloss, the Mayor, and a representative from the MBTA. Plans are not yet final, but to highlight how inaccessible the commuter rail stations are with a photo op at the Newtonville station. Another topic covered with the Mayor was the commission's efforts to make our city-sponsored festivals more inclusive for residents and visitors with disabilities, especially for children and would be happy to advertise the accessible features in her newsletter. Also should be advertised on the department's website which is organizing the event.

The last topic was about making playgrounds more accessible, for example, the efforts at Williams. The Mayor suggested the COD write an email to the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Casey Ngo Miller, recommending that when a new program, such as Reflections at Williams, starts at an elementary school, that there is an assessment of the accessibility of the playground which might need prepping to enhance accessible play elements and features. There was consensus that Eileen and Ima will draft an email and bring back to the members in September for approval before sending. Ima encouraged members to share their thoughts as to what should be in this email.

In addition to the meeting with the Mayor, Ima and Eileen shared the email reply they received from incoming Superintendent Dr. Anna Nolin. Dr. Nolin asked to meet sometime in August. They do not yet have a date to meet with her.

Also, the Co-Chairs want to work with Jini on the wording of the plaque for Girard and find a time for the COD and family and friends to gather at the bench where the plaque would be installed.

10 ADA 33rd Anniversary -Newton's Plan on 7/24/23 (7:45-8:00)

Already covered in above agenda item. At the time of this meeting, the time had not been established. Members were asked to look out for an email from the Co-Chairs, Hattie, or Jini.

11 COD August Meeting Hiatus? (8:00-8:10)

Ima asked for a motion regarding taking a break in August from holding a COD meeting. Jane made the motion to take an August hiatus. Barbara seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

12 More Project Ideas for MOD ADA Improvement Grant (8:10-8:20)

Jini asked if there were more ideas for the MOD grant application. Automatic door openers have been suggested but she would like more locations where needed. Perhaps

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there will be funds needed for the swing structure for Williams, although not yet confirmed. No additional ideas were put forth.

13 NWH Subcommittee Meeting July 11 at Noon (8:20-8:30)

Sandra encouraged members to join her and Jini tomorrow, it is on Zoom, have your lunch and join in. Sandra also mentioned that the committee is organizing a site visit at NWH outside campus, for all that would be interested. Jini will pass around the date/time available from the NWH Facilities Director, in August.

14 Adjournment (8:30)

Jane made a motion to adjourn, Barbara seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by acclamation. The meeting ended at 8:48PM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Updated: September 18, 2023

August 14, 2023 (Unless on hiatus)

These minutes were prepared and submitted by Jini Fairley.

The location of this meeting is wheelchair accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities requiring assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Sec.504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253. For Telecommunications Relay Service, please dial 711 or call City Hall's TTY/TDD line at 617-796-1089.

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Reports and Supplemental Materials:

July 2023 CDBG Report.pdf

Newton Commission on Disability

CDBG Access Projects Report

July 10, 2023

FY22 McGrath Park Perimeter Path Installation – (CD22-03A; Budget: \$91,300.00; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$91,300.00)

Constructing an accessible perimeter path around Richard McGrath Park.

The LAX practice wall was impacting the perimeter pathway construction. The League was given a deadline for the 3rd of April to fundraise for said wall

and has not responded in time. In lieu of the wall, the pathway will be able to run around the entire perimeter of the park with entry/exits on Washington

St and Myrtle St. Designer is re-assessing the parking lot side of the park as well as reconfiguring the irrigation system and redoing the fence around

the tennis courts to provide an accessible entry. Due to the rise in costs, the pathway cost is higher than expected, and Parks has requested the Community

Preservation Committee to cover the gap of \$48,000, which they agreed to. With the addition of playable fields, McGrath has become close to a million-dollar

project. The most up to date design of the park and perimeter was presented during the May meeting. DPW is moving forward with arranging all necessary

documentation for the Conservation Commission permit. As they were preparing the Notice of Intent for the Conservation Commission, it came to light that

the pathway exceeds the amount of impervious area allotted, which in turn triggers a necessary stormwater permit that must be completed by DPW. DPW is

now working to identify a funding source for the required drainage systems.

FY23 Langley/Warren/Chase Crossing – (CD23-03A; Budget: \$100,000.00; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$100,000.00)

Installation of accessible crossings at Langley Rd. and Warren St. This includes a bump out on the northeast corner of the intersection to create the space

needed to install a curb cut to cross Warren St.

DPW has completed the scope of work and concept design for this project. Project was presented at the December 2022 meeting. DPW posted the bid on the

City of Newton's website on January 5th. The bid opening date was January 19th. The contractor chosen was Antonellis Construction. The bid came in just

a little under \$150,000. Construction started on May 30th, 2023, and ended on June 16th.

FY24 City Hall Campus – (Cost Estimate: \$42,000)

Two curb cuts to be added to connect folks to the accessible elevator entrance near the Department Head parking lot. Site visit has been completed.

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NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

JUNE 2023

TOTAL NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	38
TOTAL VALUE OF TICKETS ISSUED	\$ 7,600.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 1,600.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	\$ 5,000.00

CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	34
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 6,800.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 1,200.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 4,600.00

CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	4
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 800.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 400.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 400.00

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NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2023

As of June 30th, 2023

FY 2023 Year-to-date Parking Ticket Totals

TOTAL NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	469
TOTAL VALUE OF TICKETS ISSUED	\$ 93,800.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 33,800.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 43,200.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	\$ 16,200.00

CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	404
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 80,800.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 31,000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 36,000.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 13,200.00

CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	65
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 13,000.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 2,800.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 7,200.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 3,000.00

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Treasurer's Report

Given by Jane Brown, Treasurer of the Newton Commission On Disability (COD)

Presented at the July 10, 2023 Newton COD Meeting

As of July 1, 2023, the balances of the COD accounts are as follows:

Account # 5500-335518 H-P. Fines-Disability Commission

Type: Receipts Reserved for Appropriation (These funds have to go before the City Council to be appropriated before being used)

Balance: \$ 76,889.60 (this balance reflects the FY 23 revenue minus the \$8500 expenditures, but will not be finalized until next month)

Account # 0110320-571600 Set up to pay fee for May 7, 2023 Me2/ Concert

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: \$1000.00 (Invoice for \$1000 is in process)

Account # 01C10802-513010 Operation Access – Disability Commission

Set up to pay for targeted enforcement of accessible HP Fines violations by the Police

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: \$3415.38

Account # 01C40128 Set up to pay for RRFB at Langley/Warren/Chase intersection

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: \$18,000.00

Account # 01C60211 Set up to purchase accessible equipment for Burr School playground.

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: \$1,537.00

Account#C401083-586005 Set up to purchase and install Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) units at the Waverly/Tremont intersection

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: **\$50.50** (8 APS units installed in December 2018)

Account # 5064D103 Set up in Fall 2015 to receive Community Access Monitor Program fees and pay expenses)

Type: Revolving Account

Balance: \$29**0.00**

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Williams Elementary School Playground Funding Proposal.pdf

Williams Elementary School Playground Accessibility

Proposal Summary

On behalf of parents at Williams Elementary School, I am requesting your help to improve the Williams playground to make it accessible, inclusive and enjoyable for all of its students. I am requesting \$10,831.12 which would enable Williams to purchase and install adaptive playground equipment allowing for much needed inclusion of the disabled students at Williams and help to enhance the school's already strong sense of community.

Background

The students at Williams Elementary School have a diverse range of needs, with multiple students having special intellectual, developmental, physical, social/emotional or sensory needs. Many of these students are unable to use the playground as it is currently set up. Additionally, Williams is host to a special education program, Reflections, for children with additional needs and a number of these students require mobility devices in order to navigate their surroundings. While the Reflections students have a separate classroom, a lot of thought has gone into how they can be included in a general education setting for their benefit and that of their peers. The program will also be expanding to a second classroom in 2024 with more students coming to Williams.

Our playground currently consists of a play structure with stairs, ladders and slides; a gaga pit with a ledge needed to step over to access; a motion

play structure that children climb on and ride saddle style; two fixed 10-foot basketball hoops; and five standard picnic tables.

The current playground presents a number of challenges for our students. For those with mobility devices, we have virtually no usable equipment. These students can access the area underneath the play structure, but not the play structure itself. They cannot use the picnic tables, enter the gaga pit or reach the basketball hoops.

Also, due to the limited playground equipment options, students tend to crowd the play structure, which can be scary and chaotic for some children. The noise and close proximity of other children can feel overwhelming and has caused some students to choose to stay inside during recess.

The Williams School motto, "Take care of yourself. Take care of each other. Take care of our school" stresses the importance of care and connection at all levels of our community. The lack of accessible and inclusive playground equipment negatively impacts Williams students and community by not enabling all of its members to be together.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of this request is to help make all of our students feel welcome and a part of our community in a more meaningful way. These playground improvements will let all students enjoy the playground, with equipment designed for students of all needs and abilities.

Implementation Plan

With your help, we would like the Williams Elementary School to be fitted with the following playground equipment: list of 3 items

- One adjustable basketball hoop which can be used by students with mobility devices and those without, enabling all students to better play together
- Two accessible swing seats to be included amongst the bank of swings that are already due to be installed
- Two accessible picnic tables which will allow students with mobility devices to enjoy lunch outside with their peers

list of 3 items nesting level 1

- One adjustable basketball hoop – \$4,950 (\$4,350.00 plus \$600 install)
- Two accessible swing seats – \$3,126 (\$1,463 each plus \$200 shipping, excl. tax)

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- Two accessible picnic tables – \$2,755.12 (\$1,200 each plus \$150 tax and \$205.12 shipping)

list end nesting level 1

list end

Project Budget

Total Amount Requesting: \$10,831.12

Thank you for your consideration,

Leanne Riley Dunne

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ADA COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Given by Jini Fairley, ADA/Section 504 Coordinator

Presented at the July 10, 2023 Newton Commission On Disability meeting, for activities during the month of June 2023.

Site Visits:

- Auburndale Library (twice) for potential CDBG project, with Ima (first visit), Rafik from Public Buildings, Sharon Cullins from Planning (2nd visit)
- Waban Library- With Rafik and Ima for potential CDBG project
- Underwood & Ward School tours with Stephanie Gilman from NPS, to view existing conditions for accessibility-as member of U&W Task Force
- Newton Free Library plaza with many depts. For ARPA project for resurfacing
- Langley/Warren/Chase with Ima & DPW to view sidewalk route on Langley
- Loop Trail at Norumbega Park with Conservation Office, COA, Conservators event and to assess- very accessible

Trainings:

- Webinar: MOD on Service Animals- excellent

Meeting/Events/Conference Calls:

- Bike/Pedestrian Network Plan community meeting
- Land Use Committee re: Dunkin Donuts drive-through
- Lincoln Elliot Playground Design meetings
- Underwood & Ward Feasibility Study Task Force meetings
- Co-Chairs meeting with Mayor
- Traffic Council meeting- Accessible parking space removed
- Newton Corner concepts meeting with MassDOT
- DRC for Lincoln Eliot at 150 Jackson
- Zoning & Planning Committee public hearing on village centers 2.0
- OSRP Implementation meeting
- NewCAL-Attend bi-weekly Working Group meetings & community mtgs.
- West Newton Commuter Station meetings with MBTA
- FHC Subcommittee on lottery & lease-up of affordable units
- Fair Housing Committee (FHC)- attend monthly meetings
- Complete Streets Committee & Road Paving- attend bi-weekly meetings
- CODs Alliance monthly meeting